Early Years: Implementation of Critical Thinking

**Planning and Observation Template**

Grade level \_\_\_\_\_\_

Planning Session Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Lesson Delivery, Observation and Reflection Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Model Classroom:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_’s classroom at \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ School

**Purpose of this project:**

1. to increase the extent to which critical thinking is being implemented by increasing the use of ready-made critical thinking resources

**Outcomes of the delivery, observation and reflection:**

1. to observe one way that a critical thinking lesson might be taught
2. to determine the impact of critical thinking on the engagement level of students during this particular lesson
3. to determine additional supports or tweaks to the lesson plan that may be required to engage all students in the lesson

**Process:**

1. **The Planning Session:**
2. Clarify the roles of the facilitator, classroom teacher and other observers (i.e. other grade level teachers, lead teachers, principal) during the lesson delivery.

Role of:

* Facilitator- teach the lesson
* Classroom teacher- deal with disciplinary issues that may arise; observe identified students (i.e. watch and listen); take notes
* Other observers- observe identified students (i.e. watch and listen); take notes; remain as invisible as possible (do not interact with students)

1. Investigate various ready-made critical thinking lessons that could be used with the grade level.
2. Select a *suitable* lesson that will be taught by the facilitator.

Criteria for a *suitable* lesson:

* Meets the students where they’re at in their development (i.e. Necessary prior knowledge and pre-requisite skills have been addressed previously by the classroom teacher)
* Develops skills or knowledge that can be further developed by the classroom teacher

1. Determine the lesson preparation tasks that must be completed prior to the teaching of the lesson, and list them in the *Lesson Preparation Tasks* chart.
2. Also list each task on a separate index card. (Each person will take their respective task card, and carry out their task prior to the lesson delivery.)

Each card should list:

* The task
* Who is responsible for completing the task
* The estimated amount of time it will take to complete the task

1. **Lesson Delivery, Observation and Reflection**
2. During the lesson delivery, observers take notes on the *Observations and Inference*s Chart.
3. After the lesson delivery, the facilitator and observers reflect on the lesson, analyzing the observations and drawing plausible inferences.

* Individual time to think and finish recording notes
* Group sharing

1. The facilitator and observers tweak the lesson as needed, in preparation for the observers to teach it in their own classrooms.

Teachers determine:

* A date by which they will all teach the lesson
* A meeting date, where they will reconvene to reflect on how the lesson went in their own classrooms, and select another lesson to teach

1. Optional follow-up: Lead Teachers work through the same process (pre-plan, teach or co-teach, reflect) with teachers at their own schools.

**Lesson Preparation Tasks**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **The task** | **Who is responsible for completing the task** | **Estimated amount of time to complete the task** |
| Determine which 3 students will be observed by each observer. Each observer will observe a high (thoughtful), medium (very thoughtful), and low (very, very thoughtful) student. | Classroom teacher |  |
| Prepare and distribute students’ name tags (so facilitator can call on students by name, and so observers know who they are observing.)  If students are not accustomed to wearing nametags, distribute them a day in advance so they are not a distraction during the lesson. | Secretary? -name tag preparation  Classroom teacher- name tag distribution |  |
| Prepare the students for the facilitator and observers’ visit. Facilitator meets the students the day prior to the lesson delivery, observes the teacher’s interactions with them (30 minutes) and does something with the students (reads a story, etc. 30 minutes) | Classroom teacher and facilitator | 1 hour |
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